

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATICALLY SENDING AWAY  
NOTIFICATIONS IN AN EMAIL MESSAGING SYSTEM**

A method, apparatus, and computer instructions for sending a notice that a user is away. An away indication is received to enable automatic away notifications for a period of time. Email addresses of recipients to which email messages have been previously sent within a configurable time period are identified to form a set of determined email addresses. A reply is sent with a notification that the user is away only in response to receiving an email message having a same email address within a set of determined email addresses.